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867 'father'. A child learns the fundamental kinship terms and has the
601 idea of distinguishing its relatives according to generation and
602 genealogical distance long before it can couple this knowledge accurately with differential behaviour towards kinsmen. The 6-year-old knows the correct terms and appropriate behaviour defining its relations with the members of its own paternal family and has grasped the principle of classification according to descent. But in practice he still confuses spatial proximity and relative age with kinship, beyond the limits of his own family. The 10–12 year old has mastered the schema, except for some collateral and affinal kinsmen, the terms for whom are known though he cannot describe the relationships.

183 Biological drives and cultural motives combine to produce variations
856 in the rates of evolution of different schemas. I have not the experimental data to give accurate or even sample norms, but a rough indication is possible. If the 6-year-old is compared with the 12-year-old in respect to e.g. knowledge of the kinship structure, of agricultural processes, of ritual, and of sex life, the 6-year-old is least advanced in knowledge of the kinship structure and ritual, and most advanced in his or her knowledge of sex life, while knowledge of agricultural processes could fall somewhere between these two levels.

V. Fundamental Learning Processes

● 153 In the course of the preceding discussion I have given several indications of how Tale children are taught and learn. But our investigation would be incomplete without a special consideration of the three fundamental processes utilized by the child in its learning —mimesis, identification, and co-operation. These are not the only learning techniques observable among the Tallensi, but they are the most important; and they usually appear not in isolation but in association with one another. They are most intimately interwoven in play, the paramount educational exercise of Tale children.

153 *Mimesis.* Writers on primitive education have often attributed an
828 almost mystical significance to 'imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. The Tallensi themselves declare that children learn by 'looking and doing'; but neither 'imitation' nor the formula used by the Tallensi help us to understand the actually observable process. Tale children do not automatically copy the

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actions or words of older children or adults with whom they happen to be without rhyme or reason and merely for the sake of 'imitation'. For hours at a stretch mimetic behaviour may be unnecessary, but in certain types of situation it is the child's readiest form of cognitive adaptation.

Mimesis occurs (*a*) as a response to direct stimulation; (*b*) as an adaptation to a situation the child does not know how to deal with on the basis of its attainments at the time; (*c*) in play, when it is rehearsing in fantasy its interests and the life of the world about it. The Tale boy who learns the leatherworkers' or blacksmiths' craft by closely studying his father at his work and listening to his explanations, tentatively repeating the procedure with scraps of leather or iron and gradually perfecting his skill, is no more learning by imitation than our own children do when they learn arithmetic by copying procedures demonstrated on the blackboard. If he does not understand the craftsman's procedure the lad will never learn it.

We have already had examples of mimesis in response to direct stimulation—e.g. when an infant begins to learn to dance. A child's first efforts at talking are constantly stimulated in this way. At the babbling stage its mother or grandmother, or whoever is looking after it, will frequently in playful mockery mimic its babblings, 'What are you muttering there?' says the woman, 'gba-gba-gba-ma-ma . . .', and the infant is thus stimulated to repeat these sounds again and again. I have often observed incidents such as the following: Duun was playing with his little daughter of about 2. He called her, 'Kologo-o-o ee!' and she replied 'm!'; and again he called, and she replied; and so on for about five minutes. Then he said, 'Call the dog, wo-ho, wo-ho!' The infant repeated, 'Wɔ-wo!' Again he called the dog and the infant repeated the call, and so on several times. Some one spoke to him, and turning his attention from the child, he answered. The infant, still influenced by the set of the game, repeated, as well as she could, a word or two, much to his amusement. As we have seen, the expectation of normal behaviour influences parents to talk to infants as if they understand everything.

When there is a pair or a group of children together, the oldest or most self-possessed generally gives the cues to behaviour which the others follow. This is logical, since collective action must be common

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961 153 or co-operative. Tale adults behave in exactly the same way. In an unfamiliar or difficult situation the best adaptation is to copy the actions and words of any one who understands the situation. Small children, whose schemas are still very rudimentary, are peculiarly apt to encounter unfamiliar elements in situations, and therefore readily resort to mimesis. Between the ages of 3 and 6 years, when the child is eagerly exploring its social space, this happens so often that it seems to develop a habit of mimicking older children in whose activities it is trying to participate. Thus, whenever I encountered little groups of children at play, pegging out goats, gleaning ground-nuts, or doing anything else, and asked the youngest, 'What are you doing?', one of the older children would reply, and the youngest repeat this reply in the same words. One evening I met four or five children from a neighbouring compound idling on a path. One was a girl of about 8 who had her brother of about 5 in tow. She noticed another child some way off and called out a message to him. The little brother, equally interested in the other child, called out and repeated the message in the same words and intonation. He was obviously not merely repeating automatically what he had heard, but endeavouring to draw the attention of the distant child and using the same method as his sister. A great deal of language learning goes on in this way.

Mimesis in play will be considered later.

153 155 *Identification.* A striking feature of social development among the Tallensi is the degree to which children overtly identify themselves with older siblings and parents. It is noticeable in children of 5 and 6 and becomes more marked as they grow older. The parent of the same sex is the model according to which the child regulates its conduct and from which it derives its aspirations and values. Though unwitting, the process is unmistakable. Character appears to run in families. An aggressive, loud-spoken man's children tend to become aggressive and pushing; an industrious man's sons apply themselves to work from early childhood; the dishonesty and unreliability of shifty parents tend to be reproduced in their children; and so forth. The social structure of the Tallensi with its emphasis on family and lineage solidarity, and the unity of the social sphere, encourage such identification. If one asks a child, 'Who are you?' the answer is invariably, 'I'm so-and-so's child', or 'of so-and-so's family', accom-

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panied by a manner or posture which leaves no doubt in one's mind as to who is his father or her mother. Nindɔyat of Zubiung, for instance, was notorious for his selfishness, his arrogance, and his insincerity. His son Sapak, aged 6, was his father in miniature—self-assertive, greedy, combative and refractory. Lɔyani, clansman and near neighbour of Nindɔyat, was a complete contrast to him and the most popular man in the clan. His children were among the quietest, most respectful, and most good-tempered I knew. Once they were visiting me when Sapak thrust himself upon us. Within ten minutes he had managed to offend one of the other boys and but for my presence they would have come to blows. A similar contrast in character existed between Nɛnaab's small daughters and Saandi's. Indeed, it would be possible to cite a dozen examples of the way parental character reappeared in children, if space permitted.

A child says, 'This is *our* dog, *our* sheep, *our* land, *our* child, *our* wife', identifying himself completely with his family. Some of the examples given in our discussion of the unity of the social sphere show how identification operates to constitute that unity. It is, obviously, the mechanism mainly responsible for the child's acquisition of interests, and therefore generates powerful motives for following out these interests derived from the world of adult activity. Hence Tale children all want to grow up. I often asked boys of 10 to 12 why they were so keen on hoeing though it was far more arduous than herding or playing about with their friends. The question puzzled many, though they were always emphatic about preferring work on the farm to herding or play. But discussion generally resolved their motives into this: 'We want to hoe because we want to be among the men and help to bring in more food'; and girls have the same attitude about domestic work and child-bearing. One day I found a small boy of about 5 struggling with a large goat. 'Where's your father?' I asked. 'Hoeing his bush farm,' he said. 'What about you,' I said, 'can you hoe?' 'Of course I can,' he replied proudly, 'didn't I hoe the whole compound farm?' I teased him a bit, asking him about the details of farming, and eventually he said, 'No, I can't hoe. I'm still too small.' Similarly, a little girl of about 8 told me that she had accompanied some older girls to the bush for firewood the previous day. Her mother burst out

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153 laughing and called to me: 'Don't believe her, she's much too small.'
867 But these innocent fabrications illustrate the contents of children's
155 identifications with adults.[1]

861 *Co-operation.* Mention has previously been made of children's
153 co-operation in the ordinary social and particularly economic activities in a manner and to an extent commensurate with their maturity at the time. But it must be referred to again in order to emphasize why it is specially important for children's learning. The little girl who goes with her mother to the water-hole and is given a tiny pot of water to carry is making only an infinitesimal contribution to the household's water supply. Yet it is a real contribution. She learns to carry her little pot of water in relation to a real need of the household. The boy at a sacrifice called to hold the leg of a carcass while it is skinned not only receives his first lessons in anatomy thus; he is performing a task necessary for the completion of the ceremony. The children summoned to carry balls of swish for the men building a house are contributing valuable labour. The child's training in duty and skill is always socially productive and therefore psychologically worth while to him; it can never become artificial or boring.

Yet as long as the child's co-operation is limited to subsidiary assistance—that is, until he reaches adolescence—it includes an element emanating from the child's own psychology, an element of play. Upon the adult Talɔŋa the economic system bears down with a disciplinary and constraining effect. The house must be built, plastered, and thatched in time, before the rains come; the crops must be planted, hoed, harvested at the right moment, and the penalty for negligence is severe. The child cannot yet experience this. Its co-operation is still partly wish-fulfilment and has for it the attractions of an imaginative experiment. Thus, whenever there is building in progress, they play at building as well as help carrying swish; and the play part is for the child of equal importance with the work.

153 *Play in relation to social development.* The concept of play (*ba deemrɔmɛ*,
524 'they are playing') is well defined and clearly recognized by the

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[1] This exposition of identification is over-simplified in order not to burden the general argument. In Taleland, as elsewhere, it is not the sole determinant of character formation. It has been stressed here in order to underline its educational importance.

1 [A Kind of mud mortar -- Analyst]

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[828] Tallensi. The play of Tale children, it has been pointed out, emerges
153 partly as a side-issue of their practical activities. It is also an end in
524 itself, and has a noteworthy role in their social development. In his play the child rehearses his interests, skills, and obligations, and makes experiments in social living without having to pay the penalty for mistakes. Hence there is always a phase of play in the evolution of any schema preceding its full emergence into practical life. Play, therefore, is often mimetic in content, and expresses the child's identifications. But the Tale child's play mimesis is never simple and mechanical reproduction; it is always imaginative construction based on the themes of adult life and of the life of slightly older children. He or she adapts natural objects and other materials, often with great ingenuity, which never occur in the adult activities copied, and rearranges adult functions to fit the specific logical and affective configuration of play.[1]

128 *A typical play situation.* How vividly these motifs appear in the play
524 of Tale children will be evident to the reader if I describe shortly an actual play situation as I observed and recorded it. I shall describe a typical play episode among children at the transition from infantile egocentricity and dependence to social play and participation in peripheral economic activities. It will be noted how recreational and imaginative play are interwoven with practical activities and how infantile habits still persist. The children's interests fluctuate from moment to moment, egocentric attitudes alternate with co-operative play, and the economic task receives only sporadic attention. Later on we shall consider these factors in relation to the phases of development of children's play.

524 On a morning in June I found Gomna, aged about 7, his half-sister
867 Zoŋ, aged about 6, and his friend Zoo of about the same age out
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[1] In this respect Tale children resemble our own children; cf. S. Isaacs, *Intellectual Growth in Young Children*, pp. 99–102. She sums up: 'Imaginative play builds a bridge by which the child can pass from the symbolic values of things to active inquiry into their real construction and real way of working. . . . In his imaginative play the child recreates selectively those elements in past situations which can embody his emotional and intellectual need of the present, and he adapts the details moment by moment to the present situation. . . .' Cf. also the same author's *Social Development in Young Children*, p. 425, 'Play . . . is supremely the activity which brings him [the child] psychic equilibrium in the early years.'

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857 dances one invariably sees a few small boys or girls at the tail end of the
535 line. At the beginning of the Festival season one often meets a group of children about 6–9 years old practising the dances in their play, crudely but recognizably.

857 At this stage, and till pubescence, boys spend a great deal of their
868 leisure improving their dexterity with the bow and arrow. They now
224 have bows like a man's but smaller, and real arrows with unbarbed
526 heads. They go about in small groups practising marksmanship—shooting at a guinea corn-stalk or a chunk of wood. Sometimes they challenge one another and shoot according to certain rules. The loser forfeits an arrow to the winner. All this is recreational play; but it has a very practical aspect, recognized by adults and children. In Taleland the bow is the symbol of manhood; and every man must know how to wield it. The long years of practice necessary to become an accomplished shot begin with the small boy's first toy bow and extend through the play of childhood and pubescence. Part of this play-practice is the hunting of small field animals and birds. To the boy it is a real hunt, demanding knowledge and alertness and yielding a favourite titbit. Yet it is play as well, being neither obligatory nor dangerous, and being mimetically derived from an adult activity. This has great educational importance. The boy in his play identifies himself with the men, accepts their practical valuation of the bow and arrow, and tries out, as it were, what it feels like to be a man in this respect. Boys often hunt thus in groups, especially when they are out herding cattle, and share the spoil, thus training themselves in co-operation and fair dealing. By the age of 11–12 boys begin to accompany their fathers or elder brothers to real hunts, though they remain onlookers for the most part, whose principal task is to help carrying home anything killed. Not till adolescence will they be allowed to use barbed and poisoned arrows; but quasi-playful hunting thus shades over into the real activity for which it is a preparation.

857 Imaginative play is rich and frequent during this period, though its
● 153 themes appear to be few. Family life, the principal economic activities, and domestic ritual supply the mimetic content. Sometimes children are entirely preoccupied with such play for hours at a time; often it is interwoven with practical activities or appears as a resonance of practical activities in which the children co-operate.